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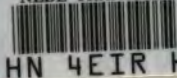
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RUGANTINO;

OR. THE BRAVO OF VENICE.

V18494 A MELO-DRAME :

12.262 By P. G. Lewis.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY
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 AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

By W. OXBERRY, *Comedian.*

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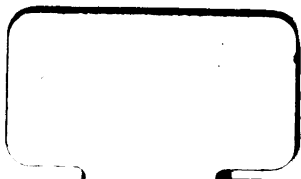
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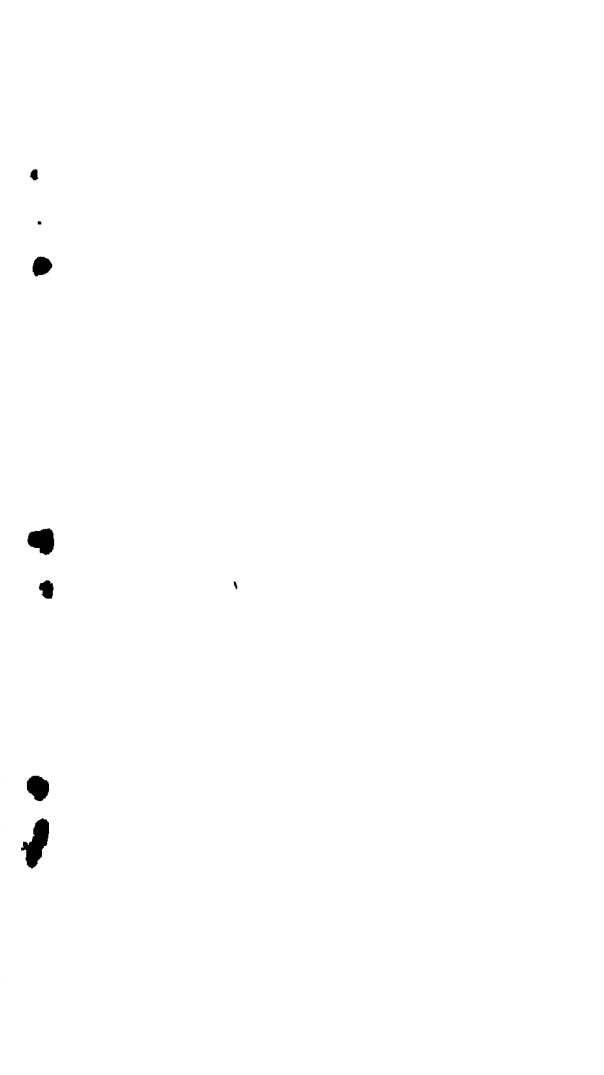
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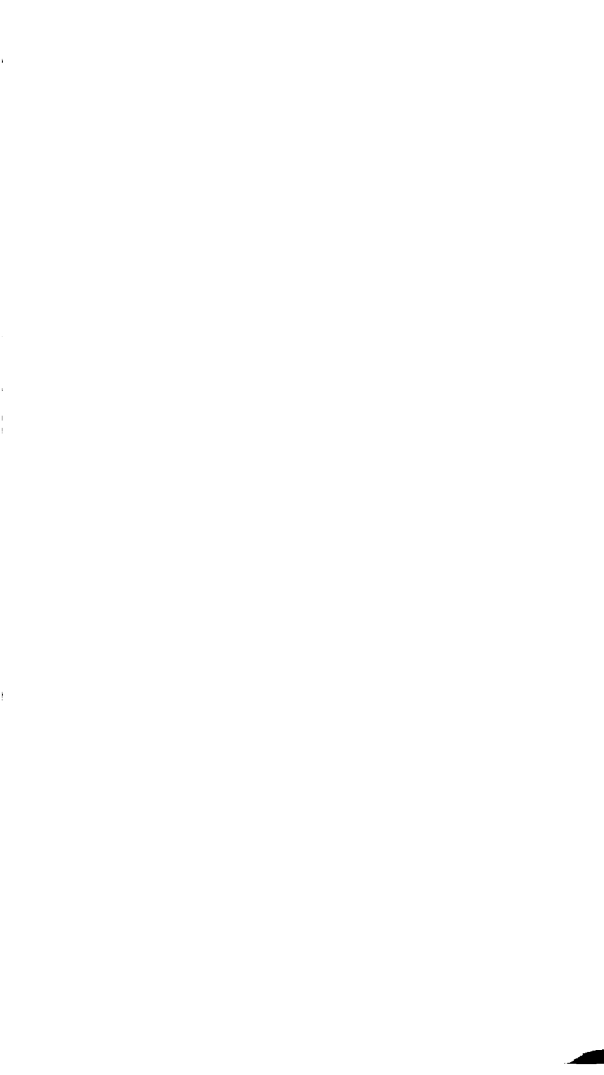
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Remarks.

RUGANTINO.

IN life there is a period, a short epoch between boyhood and manhood, in which the mind loses the wild imagination of the one state, without gaining the judgment of the other. There is always in this interval, this neutral ground, as it were, between fancy and reason, an affectation of wisdom, a supercilious disdain of that which delights, in opposition to that which informs. It has not yet learned the value of fiction simply considered as fiction, and invariably mistakes fastidiousness for taste. Even so, it is, but upon a more extended scale, in the history of literature; in its early age it is fruitful in prodigious fiction; the imagination of the writer, as of his readers, is curbed by no restraint; in the next stage, the taste becomes fastidious, dry, and hard; the mind does not seek to attain that which is great, but to avoid that which is ridiculous; in the last period the empire of the imagination recommences, not because the mind has grown too weak to relish unadorned reason, but because it has grown strong enough to despise the littleness of affectation.

The present day is on the skirts of this last epoch ; works of pure imagination are beginning to hold their proper place ; the literature of the North is allowed to be a world in itself, the produce of which world is not to be judged by the relative produce of Grecian and Italian soils, but by its own intrinsic merit, all other considerations set aside ; we are pleased to relish its peculiar fruits though essentially different in flavour from the fruits of warmer climates.

He, who inclines to these principles, will feel little hesitation in allowing praise to the wild and improbable fiction of Rugantino. It seems to be written in downright mockery and defiance of reason ; as if the author had set out with a firm resolution of leaving common sense behind him, a point which he has fully accomplished, leaving the poor creature in utter amazement at his flight : yet, sooth to say, that straight-laced common sense which is too proud and unsocial to mix in the company of fairies, giants, gnomes, "et id genus omne," is more to be pitied than admired. To us, the wonders of Rugantino are as delightful as the lamp of Aladdin, or the miraculous purse of Fortunatus ; it must indeed be confessed that the Melo-drama is by no means equal to the romance on which it is founded ; in Abellino there is no attempt to reconcile impossibilities with truth ; it is an honest, downright fiction, enjoying all the brilliant advantages of that class of composition ; the Melo-drama, on the other hand, has more of improbability and less of fiction. Rugantino is far from being the same bold bandit we have admired in Abellino ; still he is a very clever, and what is more to the purpose, a very popular gentleman.

The fiction itself has been dressed up in all manner of shapes. First there was the German Romance of Abälino : then a German drama founded upon it ; then Lewis' trans-

lation of the first, followed by his *Rugantino*; then the *L'homme a trois visages*, of the French, a clever little *Melo-drama*. Then, Abellino put on a woman's habit and became in Germany *Die Weibliche Abälino*, the female *Abälino*, a play,—which was again transformed at Paris into the *La Femme a trois visages*, the woman of three faces. Whether the bandit has appeared under any other forms, we know not, but it is most probable that he has.

The merits of Lewis have been more frequently underrated than overrated; he was a scholar in the liberal acceptance of the word; a man most certainly of talent, if not of imagination; no writer of modern times has played so powerfully with terror; even now his "*Monk*," remains unrivalled, a perfect model of romance; his language and description are for the most part extremely simple, and if his effects are exaggerated, the means by which they are produced are simplicity itself. That he has borrowed largely, cannot be denied; but what writer of modern, or even of the boasted ancient, times, has not done so? Why should that be a sin in Lewis, which, if not a virtue, is at least excused, in others?—Weeds will grow of themselves around the tomb of genius, but it must indeed be a barbarous hand that would erase one letter from its epitaph.

S.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation is generally two hours.

Stage Directions.

By R.H. is meant Right Hand.
L.H. Left Hand.
S.E. Second Entrance.
U.E. Upper Entrance.
M.D. Middle Door.
D.F. Door in Flat.
R.H.D. Right Hand Door.
L.H.D. Left Hand Door.

Costume.

—————

- RUGANTINO.**—First dress.—Brown tunic.—Second dress.—A bravo's dress of brown and scarlet serge.—Third dress.—Friar's gown.—Fourth dress.—Suit of armour.—Fifth dress.—White kerseymere doublet, pantaloons, and purple scarf, embroidered with silver.
- MEMMO.**—Brown doublet, breeches, and cloak embroidered with gold.
- STEPHANO.**—Scarlet doublet, breeches, and cloak trimmed with blue, and gilt buttons.—Second dress.—tunic suit.
- CONTARINO.**—Green velvet tunic suit, embroidered with silver.
- PAROZZI.**—Brown,—ibid.
- DUKE.**—Velvet robe and vest, embroidered with gold.
- PATRIARCH.**—White surplus. purple robe, and mitre.
- FALIERI.**—Orange coloured tunic, embroidered with silver.
- GONZAGO.**—Crimson,—ibid.
- PISANI.**—Black velvet tunic, embroidered with silver.
- BERTOLDO.**—Green cloth tunic, trimmed with yellow galoon.
- JUANILLO.**—Brown,—ibid.
- PAOLO.**—Dark serge doublet, trimmed with black.
- HERALD.**—Buff dress and herald's coat.
- LORDS.**—Various coloured tunics, embroidered.
- SERVANTS.**—Various coloured liveries.
- SAILORS.**—Shape jackets and trousers.
- ROSABELLA.**—First dress.—White muslin and veil.—Second dress.—White satin, spangled with silver, white drapery. Third dress.—Spangled muslin. pale green crape drapery, embroidered with silver.
- CAMILLA.**—First dress.—Muslin petticoat, trimmed with pink and silver points, pink satin body, trimmed with silver.—Second dress.—Spangled muslin dress, and drapery trimmed with sea weed and cockle shells.
- LAURA.**—White petticoat, trimmed with blue points, white apron, and blue calico body.
- NUNS.**—White dresses, bibs, veils, and rompers.

Persons Represented.

	1820.	1805.
	<i>Drury Lane.</i>	<i>Covent Garden.</i>
<i>Andreas, Duke of Venice</i>	Mr. Bengough.	Mr. Murray.
<i>Lomellino</i>	Mr. Carr.	Mr. Cresswell.
<i>Manfrone</i>	Mr. Marshall.	Mr. Bennett.
<i>The Patriarch of Venice</i>	Mr. Cooke.	Mr. Jeffries.
<i>Parozzi</i>	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Claremont.
<i>Contarino</i>	Mr. T. P. Cooke.	Mr. Brinton.
<i>Memmo</i>	Mr. Oxberry.	Mr. Liston.
<i>Falleri</i>	Mr. Kent.	Mr. Klanert.
<i>Gonzaga</i>	Mr. Ebsworth.	Mr. Field.
<i>Pisani</i>	Mr. Miller.	Mr. King.
<i>Stephano</i>	Mr. Harley.	Mr. Blanchard.
<i>Bertoldo</i>	Mr. Minton.	Mr. Beverley.
<i>Juanillo</i>	Mr. Coveney.	Mr. Atkins.
<i>Paolo</i>	Mr. Evans.	Mr. Abbot.
<i>Herald</i>	Mr. Maddocks.	Mr. Street.
<i>Rugantino</i>	Mr. Wallack.	Mr. H. Johnstone.
<i>Rosabella</i>	Mrs. Hill.	Mrs. Gibbs.
<i>Camilla</i>	Mrs. Sparks.	Mrs. Mattocks.
<i>Laura</i>	Miss Fairbrother.	Mrs. Frederick.
<i>Bettina</i>	Miss Tidswell.	Mrs. Emery.

THE CHARACTERS IN THE MASQUE

BY

Messrs. T. Blanchard, Lee, Menage, Dubois, &c.
 Mrs. St. Leger, Mrs. Humphries, Miss Waddy, Miss Searle, Mrs. Watts,
 Mrs. Follett, &c. &c.

RUGANTINO.

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—*The Place of St. Giorgio Maggiore, at sunset. The Curtain rises to slow Music.*

Enter PAROZZI followed by MEMMO, L.H.S.E.

Mem. But be patient, Parozzi; at least be patient!

Par. Patient?—Has not Rosabella rejected me? nay; when I taxed her with a passion for Flodoardo, did she not insultingly contrast the virtues by which he dignified his obscurity, with the vices by which, she said, my nobility was disgraced?

Mem. Well! well! To be sure nothing is half so disagreeable as truth; and it's certainly mighty provoking—

Par. Provoking? If I forgive her——! But her fate is fixed! She dies.

Mem. (*Shuddering.*)—Dies? My dear Parozzi, don't look so fierce, or I shall certainly take to my heels! D—d—dies, said you?

Par. She dies! the Bravo Rugantino has received his hire——

Mem. Rugantino?—I had much rather you wouldn't mention him.

Par. He, at whose name all Venice quakes—

Mem. I don't know what all Venice does; but I'm sure I do!

Par. Annually, on the evening before her birth-day, Rosabella goes in solemn procession to pass some hours alone in the shrine of her patroness, St. Rosa. There will Rugantino meet her this very night; there too will I be!

Mem. You? Won't it be dangerous too—

Par. Ha! my revenge would be but half gratified, did I not see the blow struck myself! did not Rosabella hear as she expires, "Remember the scorned Parozzi." (*A galley passes at a distance from R.H. to L.H.*) But look, Memmo, is not that the galley—

Mem. Which carried out Contarino? 'tis the same! It approaches! Contarino is on board.

The Galley arrives—CONTARINO springs on shore.

Par. and Mem. Welcome, Contarino: welcome!

Par. Quick; your tidings—

Con. Are excellent—The Emperor approves of our conspiracy: in a week his troops will arrive to assist us, and then shall we be masters of Venice. But the Duke's prime counsellors, Manfrone and Lomelino, suspect our plans, and traverse them: they must be despatched immediately.

Par. For that have I already provided; Rugantino is in my pay, and—

Con. Rugantino? I have heard much of this strange man; but what I am to believe—

Par. Learn that from me. Soon after your departure a young stranger arrived here, called Flodoardo. His plausible manners pleased the Duke; his Apollo-like form fascinated Rosabella; but he became the general idol when he found means to seize the five banditti, who had so long been the terror of Venice. *We* knew them well, Contarino, and had often found their daggers of use.

Con. But how did he discover their lurking-place?

Par. I know not; suffice it to say, that the five banditti were executed; but on the following morning this paper was found affixed to the palace-gates.

Con. (*Reading.*)—"Venetians! the banditti who suffered yesterday have left a sixth behind them, whose single arm equals those of the other five. Ye, who need my dagger, seek me! As a proof of my skill, let St. Bertrand's cave be searched; 'twas there I stabbed to the heart the senator Carlo Foscari. From the Venetian Bravo, Rugantino."—Carlo Foscari?

Par. The Duke's near kinsman, who had disappeared some months before.

Con. This paper shows a daring mind.

Par. "Ha!" cried I, when I had perused it "this is the very man we need!"—But Rugantino knew of my connection with his deceased associates, and ere I had time to seek *him*, he found *me*. Oh! 'tis the ugliest knave—his face

so deform'd by scars—his eye-brows so black and bushy—then his smile is a terrific grin, and when he laughs, the sound is enough to scare mirth out of the universe.

Con. But Lomelino and Manfrone—

Par. He has engaged to despatch them the instant that he receives 10,000 ducats.

Con. Oh! a trifle! Memmo is rich; he'll furnish them

Mem. I? That's ever your way. Always Memmo! and nothing but Memmo!

Con. Simpleton! If our plot succeeds, have we not promised—

Mem. Yes, yes! I own you give me plenty of promises—but you take from me plenty of realities! However, you shall have the 10,000 ducats this once—though I protest, it's like parting with ten thousand drops of my heart's blood.

Par. Peace! peace!—Have you brought the arms, Contarino?

Con. Yes: where shall I deposit—

Par. Oh! at Memmo's, where we'll meet again at ten to-night.

Mem. The arms at my house? Dear, dear! now why at mine?—If the house should be searched, then I shall get into a scrape, and—

Par. (*In a stern voice.*)—Silence! It shall be so.—Till ten farewell, Contarino.

Con. Farewell. [*Exeunt; Con. L.H. Par. R.H.*]

Mem. Now that's the way I'm always treated! they borrow my money, make me their scapegoat, snap my nose off on all occasions, and all because I'm rather apt to be afraid, and honest

enough to own it.—Hang it! I'll try, whether putting on a huff-bluff look like themselves, and strutting with a swaggering stride thus, won't awe them into—(*Noise without.*) Hey! what's all this uproar?

Enter HERALD, followed by JUANILLO, BETTINA, PAOLO, and Mob, R.H.S.E.

Juan. Silence!

Bet. Aye, aye! let's hear the proclamation.

Paolo. Silence! silence!

Juan. Aye: silence! silence!

Mem. Why don't somebody knock that fellow down, who makes such a noise with crying silence?

All. Knock him down! knock him down! silence!

Herald. (*Reading.*)—"Whereas the senator Foscari was found murdered by the Bravo Rugantino, the Duke hereby promises five hundred ducats to any one who shall discover where the murderer is concealed."—God save the Duke!

—(*Trumpets.*)

[*Exit, L.H.*]

All. Huzza!

Mem. Now, friends, here's a good round sum to be earned by some of you.

Juan. By none of us, Signor Memmo. Oh! this Rugantino's a terrible fellow! why, when young Flodoardo seized the five other banditti, didn't this Rugantino, who was the sixth, still contrive to escape?

Enter STEPHANO, R.H.U.E.

Steph. I'm beyond my time, and I fear Camilla—Heyday, what do all these people here ?

Juan. But why did Flodoardo leave Venice ?

Mem. 'Tis suspected, he was in love with the Duke's daughter, who is already promised to the Prince of Milan.

Steph. What say they of my master.

Juan. Well ! before he left us, I wish he had caught this Rugantino as finely as he caught his five companions : I protest I can't sleep for fear of the villain.

Paolo. Nor I.

Juan. Nor I.

Steph. I see Camilla coming. Now then to scare them away.

Juan. One thing's certain : If ever Rugantino's found, Flodoardo is the only man to take him.

Mem. The only man ?—Come ! come ! there are others—I don't boast of my courage—

Juan. And I'm sure, nobody else does, who knows you, Signor.

Mem. But if I once set eyes on this Rugantino, I'll put myself into this attitude, spring upon him thus, and exclaim in a terrible voice—

Steph. (*Who has approached softly, puts his head in among them, and cries in a hoarse voice.*)—Rugantino's coming !

All. (*Scream, and run off, some R.H. some L.H. crying,*) Where ? where ? where ? run ! run ! run !

Steph. (*Advances, laughing.*) Rugantino's name sent them off like so many peas out of a pop-gun.—But to give the Devil his due, Signor Memmo ran by far the fastest.—Now then for this antiquated Duenna, who, in defiance of time and her looking-glass, fancies herself a girl of fifteen; and who is so passionately fond of dancing, that she even walks the streets in a fandango step. 'Tis a hard task which the Prince of Milan has put on me, to make love to this superannuated coquette; but as he insists that no means of shaking Rosabella's constancy to Flodoardo should be left untried—She's here.

Enter CAMILLA, R.H.

Cam. Is it you, Signor Stephano?

Steph. (*In heroics.*) And is it you, divine object of my—

Cam. Oh! sweet Signor, no raptures, if you love me!—'Tis late, and I'm so *pressée*, as the French have it.—I've only time to assure you, that I've spared no pains to influence my lady in your master's favour.

Steph. And what success—

Cam. Absolutely none! her love to Flodoardo is immoveable; but perhaps when the Duke shall know of her attachment to this needy stranger, his remonstrances may induce her to give him up—But bless me! I must away, for I've a thousand things to do. You must know, that tomorrow night the Duke gives a grand *fête* on one of the islands of the Adriatic Sea, in honour

of his daughter's birth day. A mask is to be performed, called "*The Triumph of Thetis*;" and my lady, myself, and some other beauties of the Court are to represent heathen goddesses. Now you must know, that I'm reckoned excellent in a mask.

Steph. I don't doubt it, Signora; I dare say, I should admire you in a mask more than in any other way.

Cam. And how, do you think, I was disguised at the last masquerade?

Steph. How, pray?

Cam. How?—As Venus!—Wasn't that charming?

Steph. As Venus?—Ah! Signora, how admirably you must have been disguised!*

Cam. Nobody found me out the whole night!

Steph. I dare say not; how the devil should they? *(Aside.)*

Cam. And when I unmasked, the surprize!—

Steph. Was excessive, I doubt not.

Cam. Universal, Signor!—As to the Duke, he was perfectly thunderstruck.

Steph. Struck, Signora?—He must have been struck all of a heap! why, if I had been there, I don't think, I should ever have recovered it!

Cam. And now guess, which of the heathen goddesses I am to be to-morrow night!

Steph. I can't imagine—Medusa perhaps—or very likely, one of the three—Furies. *(Aside.)*

Cam. A Syren, Signor! a Syren!

* This is borrowed from *La Sage's Comedy of Turcaret.*

Steph. A Syren?—Ah! Signora, I shouldn't have guess'd that in a century!

Cam. And I've such a divine dress! I shall be all over sea-weed and cockle-shells, with a comb in one hand, and a looking-glass in t'other; and I shall dance an entire new *pas seul*, and—You never saw me dance, I think?

Steph. Frequently!

Cam. Indeed! Where pray?

Steph. (*Bowing with a languishing air.*) In my dreams, Signora!

Cam. (*Aside.*) In his dreams! How delicate a compliment! How refined, how fanciful, how far-fetched, how French!

Steph. But as you're to be a Syren, oh! too adorable Camilla, suffer me to be your attendant Triton!

Cam. An attendant Triton? charming! Granted! granted, sweet Signor!

Steph. Then need I not envy Neptune himself the possession of his Amphitrite!

Cam. (*Aside.*) Heroic creature! Let me die, but he's quite a *pastor fido*!—But I must begone.
(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Steph. First in the Prince's name let me force this jewel upon your finger, and next in my own print a kiss on your snowy hand! (*Kneeling.*)

Cam. Oh! mercy!—I desire—I entreat—*je vous jure*—

Steph. (*Rising.*) Nectar and Ambrosia!

Cam. Oh! sweet Signor!

Steph. Divine Signora!

Cam. Adieu!

Steph. Farewell!

Both. Adieu! adieu! adieu!

[*Exeunt*; *Steph.* R.H. *Cam.* L.H.]

Enter PAROZZI, L.H.

Par. She comes! my lovely victim comes! But no more does my heart melt with tenderness at thy sight, Rosabella! No; hatred fills my bosom wholly, and should Rugantino's dagger fail, my own—They are here! Now then for St. Rosa's shrine! Away! [Exit, R.H.]

(*A solemn Procession crosses the Stage, from L.H. to R.H.—Rosabella, Laura, and Ladies, Priests with lighted Torches, &c. Bettina, Juanillo, Paolo, and Mob, as Spectators.*)

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Palace.*

Enter LOMELINO and MANFRONE, R.H.

Man. Enough, Lomelino; the Prince of Milan may depend on my services.

Lom. His plans are daring and romantic, it's true; but still—

Man. Hush! the Duke. (*Flourish of Trumpets.*)

Enter the DUKE, with a paper, L.H.

The Duke. (*Crosses to Centre.*) Oh! insolence unparalleled! Look, my friends! this paper is from Rugantino.

Man. How?

Lom. And it contains—?

The Duke. Read! read!

Lom. (*Reading.*) “Duke of Venice! In your late proclamation you promise to any one who shall *discover* Rugantino, five hundred ducats; now to any one who shall *seize* him, I promise five thousand. Your servant, Signor; Rugantino.” Unheard-of assurance! But how did this paper reach you?

The Duke. Will you believe me, friends! ’Twas fixed against my chamber-door! against my very chamber-door!

Man. Inconceivable!

The Duke. Nothing is safe from this miscreant! I tremble for myself—for Venice—for my child—Say, where is Rosabella?

Lom. She ever passes the night preceding her birth-day in St. Rosa’s shrine alone.

The Duke. Alone? In this time of danger that must not be! Good Manfrone, tell Camilla to bear my orders, that her lady should return instantly.—(*Crosses to R.H.*)—[*Exit Manfrone, L.H.*]—Follow me, Lomelino! I am half mad with anger and confusion!

[*Flourish of Trumpets.*—*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE III.—*An illuminated Church, with St. Rosa’s shrine in the centre. On L.R.S.E. large iron-grated doors; on R.H.S.E. a magnificent tomb, on which is inscribed, “Here lies Carlo Foscari, who was inhumanly murdered by the Bravo, Rugantino.” The Patriarch of Venice, Monks, Parozzi, Bettina, Juanillo, Paolo,*

and Spectators, are discovered in groupes. The Procession enters through the iron gates, L.H.S.E. Rosabella kneels to the Patriarch; he gives her his benediction, and then orders the Spectators to withdraw; they all obey, except Parozzi, who conceals himself behind the tomb. The Patriarch then retires with the Monks, closing the iron gates after him. Rosabella desires to be left alone, and Laura and the Ladies retire to a distant part of the Church, L.H.S.E.

Ros. I know not why—but an unusual dread has seized on my heart—this sacred place—the dead and awful silence—that tomb too, where rests the murdered Foscari—Let me banish these terrors in prayer at yonder shrine. Oh! Flo-doardo! (Going.)

(During this speech an ancient BEGGAR comes slowly from behind the tomb, R.H.S.E. his head is nearly bald: he has a long white beard, is clad in loose tattered garments, and leans on a staff.

Beggar. Alack! alack!

Ros. What feeble voice—?

Beggar. Will no one aid a poor old man?

Ros. (Hastening to support him.) Lean on me, father! Lean on me!

Beggar. Thanks, dear lady! The dampness of these marble walls—Alas! I faint!

Ros. And there is no seat—Stay! stay!—(She

draws a low couch from the shrine; the Beggar sinks upon it: Rosabella kneels behind him, and supports his head.)—Rest here, father! Perhaps this essence may revive—(*Giving a smelling-bottle.*)

Beggar. Kindest lady! You are—you are the Duke's daughter, I think?

Ros. I am.

Beggar. Oh! dear lady—(*In a low tone and suddenly, altering his voice.*)—Start not! your life is in danger!

Ros. My life?—

Beggar. (*Clasping her hand.*) Hush!—Fear nothing! You shall not die; but if you value existence, be silent.

Ros. Unhand me!—I'll fly, and—(*Attempting to go; the Beggar suddenly starts up, still detaining her, and whistles; she sinks on one knee as if imploring mercy. Parozzi springs from behind the tomb.*)

Par. Is't done?—(*The Beggar has drawn a dagger with which he points to the kneeling Rosabella.*)—Ha!—Strike, I say! Strike, or thus—(*Drawing his dagger, and rushing to stab her.*)

Beggar. (*In a voice of thunder.*) I strike!—(*At the moment that Parozzi raises his arm, the Beggar stabs him, and Parozzi falls lifeless at his feet. Rosabella with a faint scream starts from the ground, but the Beggar still detains her and she falls exhausted into his arms.*)—Fear not! tremble not! but mark me! I have saved your life; Rosabella, remember that! Remember too, that from this hour our fates are united indissolubly!

thou art mine, Rosabella; thou never shalt be another's.

Ros Thine? thine?

Beggar. Mine!—(*Holding up the dagger.*)—I swear it by this blood, which I have shed for thee! by this heart, which I would drain for thee! by this kiss, thou Bravo's bride!

Ros. (*Struggling to disengage herself.*)—Fearful man—my voice—my cries—

Enter CAMILLA, L.H.S.E. by the Iron Gate.

Cam. Signora, I come—Help! murder! murder!

[*Exit, L.H.S.E.*

Beggar. I must away! But know'st thou, *who* press'd thy cheek, Rosabella? Go; tell thy father, the proud Duke, 'twas the Bravo, Rugantino!

Ros. Rugantino?—(*She staggers back a few paces, and supports herself against a pillar.*)

Re-enter CAMILLA, L.H.S.E. followed by the PATRIARCH, and Monks, with Torches; Laura and the Ladies also return in confusion. While they enter, RUGANTINO throws off his false beard and Beggar's dress, and appears as Friar; he steps behind a pillar, draws a cowl over his face, and when the Monks enter, he mixes with the crowd.

Cam. This way! this way!

Patriarch. No one is here!

Cam. 'Twas a Beggar, whose bloody dagger—

Patriarch. Search every aisle! Away!

(*They disperse themselves through the aisles.*)

Rug. (*As he passes Rosabella, whose Ladies are listening to Camilla's story, he clasps her hand, and says in a low voice.*)—Remember!

Ros. (*Starting.*) Heavens!--that Friar is--

Rug. (*Still in a low voice, while he shows her the bloody dagger.*) I saved your life!

Ros. (*After a moment's struggle.*) Leave me! save yourself! Fly!--

Rug. (*Aloud, in a sanctified tone.*) Benedicite! fair daughter!

[*Exit, L.H.U.E.*

Ros. I die!--Oh! support me!--(*Her Ladies crowd around her; at the same moment the Patriarch and Monks return, and form a groupe, while the Scene closes.*)

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber, with folding Doors and Steps, in Memmo's House.*

Enter CONTARINO, FALIERI, and GONZAGA, M.D. *Servants bring in a Table, with Goblets, Lights, &c.*

Fal. 'Tis strange that Parozzi is not yet arrived.

Con. 'Tis past the hour he mentioned.

Gon. Memmo too, who went to seek him, returns not.—

(*During these speeches, the Servants arrange the Table, and retire.*)

Con. Where is the place of general rendezvous?

Fal. In the ruined Carthusian Monastery. When last we mustered—

Mem. (*Without, M.D.*) Contarino! Falieri!

Con. 'Tis Memmo's voice.

MEMMO rushes in, M.D. followed by PISANI.

Mem. There! there's a pretty spot of work!

Con. What's the matter?

Mem. There's a fine kettle of fish!

Con. What's the matter, I say?

Mem. The devil's the matter! murder's the matter! hanging's the matter! the matter! Parozzi is—he is—I can't bring my tongue to speak such a terrible word!

Pis. Friends, Farozzi is murdered.

Con. Murdered?

Fal. By whom?

Mem. By whom? by that fiend in a human form! by that pest, from whose knife no man's throat is safe! by Rugantino.

Con. Fal. and Gon. Rugantino?

Pis. Even so!

Mem. And what's worst, Parozzi has let him into our secret; and to obtain his own pardon, perhaps at this moment the Bravo is telling all to the Duke.

Con. Confusion! *(Noise without, M.D.)*

Fal. Steps on the stairs!

Mem. I dare say, the officers of justice!

(Runs to L.H.)

Gon. Bar the door! *(Cantarino bars it hastily; instantly a loud knock is heard.)* *[ed.]*

Mem. We're all undone! *(The knock is repeat*

Con. Is there no out-let?

Mem. None! none! except one. Thirty feet high, out of the window into the canal!

(*A third knock.*)

A Voice. (*Without, M.D.*) Open, I say!

All Consp. What's that? what's that?

Con. Who speaks? (*The door bursts open, and Rugantino appears in his Bravo's habit; his girdle is stuck full of daggers and pistols, his forehead is high, bald on one side, on the other covered with long straight shining hair; his beard, thick eyebrows, and enormous mustachoes are black, and his face is marked with several scars.*)

Rug. (*In a terrible voice as the door opens.*) Rugantino!—Your slave, sweet Gentlemen Conspirators.

Mem. I'm a dead man!

Con. (*Struggling to recover himself.*) You among us? You—Parozzi's murderer?

Rug. Right! but mark me! I loved Rosabella, Parozzi was my rival, and I stabbed him to the heart. Now swear, that Rosabella shall be mine, elect me your chief, and I'll keep your secret.

Con. You our chief? Think you we'll stoop—

Rug. Ye have stooped to *Vice*; can ye stoop lower? Will you accept my terms?

All. Never!

Rug. Then go your own way; *mine* leads to the Duke! to the Duke, sweet Signors! Farewell!

(*Going.*)

Con. (*Placing himself before the door, which he closes.*)—Not so fast! Draw, friends, draw! the villain's in our power, and—

(*All draw.*)

Rug. In your power? Ho! ho! (*Laughing.*)
Now listen. When I left my home—

Mem. (*Pointing downwards.*) That must be there for certain.

Rug. (*Sternly.*) Silence!

Mem. Oh! mercy on me!

Rug. I left on my table a sealed packet, containing a full account of your plans. This packet, if I return not before the clock strikes eleven, will be conveyed to the Duke. Now then, if you choose to stab me, I'll lend you a sword myself (*Throwing himself carelessly into a seat.*)

Con. Before eleven? (*The chimes are heard.*)

Mem. And hark! it chimes the three quarters!
Oh! go, go, go, my dear Rugantino!

Rug. Do you accept my terms?

All. We do! we do!

Rug. A list of your associates!

Con. Thou hast it. (*Giving a paper.*)

Rug. (*Rises*) So! the attack must be made to-morrow night.

Con. To-morrow? The emperor's troops not arrived—

Rug. (*Proudly.*) Cowards! Have ye not an host in Rugantino?

Con. It must not be, for—

Rug. No? must not? Then here I sit, and the clock must strike eleven. (*Resuming his seat.*)

Mem. Sit? sit? For Heaven's sake, consent to every thing if he will but go!

Con. I could tear my flesh!—Rugantino, be all as thou wilt! But time flies! The packet—

Rug. Nay, I go; but first some wine.

Mem. (*Filling a goblet hastily.*) There! there! my dear little fellow!

Rug. Now pledge me! Pledge me on your knees!

(*All take goblets and kneel, except Rugantino.*)

All. We pledge you, Rugantino!

Rug. (*Starting from his chair, and looking at them as they kneel.*) Ho! ho! Look! how low guilt can reduce the proudest! Rise, rise! Rugantino will not deign to drink with you—(*Dashing down the goblet.*)—Farewell! (*Going.*)

Con. (*In a low voice to Falieri.*) At least I'll watch whither—(*Following him; Rugantino turns suddenly round, and presents a pistol at his breast.*)

Rug. (*In a thundering voice.*)—Follow me, and I fire! This pistol can kill but *one*, 'tis true: but who among you chooses to be that one?

Mem. Not I, I'm sure!

Rug. Then let no one quit the room, till he hears my whistle, (*In a terrible voice*) or he dies! (*He stops at the door, takes off his hat, and bows.*) Sweet Signors, eternally your slave! [*Exit, M.D.*]

Mem. Thank Heaven! he's gone at last!

Con. 'Tis in vain to struggle.

Fal. We are in his toils; yet if he's honest, he'll be a powerful ally. (*The whistle is heard.*)

Con. Hark! 'tis the signal!

Fal. Away then!

[*Exeunt, M.D.*]

Mem. Aye! aye! away with you!—Oh! Memmo, Memmo, Memmo! Cursed was the hour, when you poked your foolish noddle into a plot!

[*Exit, M.D.*]

SCENE V.—*Rosabella's Chamber.*

Enter ROSABELLA and CAMILLA, R.H.

Cam. Yes, child; your adventure with this Bravo has made the Duke resolve, that you shall marry the Prince of Milan instantly. As to your love for Flodoardo—

Rosa. Love, Camilla? Dear, dear, there's no love in the case! what I feel for him is friendship—esteem—and surely Flodoardo deserves to inspire such sentiments. Deserves?—ah! what does Flodoardo *not* deserve? (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Cam. Very well; then you'd be quite contented, were Flodoardo to marry another woman?

Rosa. Oh! but Flodoardo would *not* marry another woman; of that I'm quite sure, Camilla!

Cam. Ah! child, child! I see this Flodoardo will make you give a great deal of pain to your dear good father.—(*Practising her dance.*)

Rosa. Indeed? Then I am sure, I wish, I had never seen him! This odious Flodoardo!—to make me give pain—I'm quite vexed with him—quite angry—I don't like him at all!

Cam. (*Shaking her head.*) What? not like him?

Rosa. No! not at all! (*Hesitating.*)

Cam. Not at all.

Rosa. Not that I *hate* him neither; for you know, Camilla, there's no reason, why I should *hate* this poor dear Flodoardo?

Cam. But there are reasons why you should try to forget him!

Rosa. (*Eagerly.*) Oh! as to that, I protest, I

vow so often every day to think no more of him, that all day long I think of nothing else! and when he declared his love, didn't I frown and order him to quit Venice?—though I'm sure, I've done nothing but weep ever since he obeyed me? Now what *can* I do more?—Camilla, I'll go to my father, (*Crosses to L.H.*) avow every thing to him, and perhaps—

Cam. (*Dancing.*) No! that step's not right.

Rosa. And why is that step not right!

Cam. Because first you should sink thus—then *borée* thus—then— (*Dancing.*)

Rosa. What? before I go to my father?

Cam. Lord! child, I wasn't thinking about your father; I was thinking of my new *pas seul*, which I mean to dance at the *fête* to-morrow.

Rosa. Psha!

Enter LAURA, L.H.

Laura. Signora Camilla, your Syren's dress is finished.

Cam. (*Crosses to L.H.*) Oh! charming!—I come, dear Laura. [*Exit Laura, L.H.*]

Rosa. (*Surprised.*) What?—a Syren's dress?

Cam. Yes; as *you* are to be the goddess *Thetis*, I mean to be one of your Syrens. Oh! such a dress, Signora! (*Going.*)

Rosa. Stay, stay, Camilla.—Surely at your age—

Com. My age? Let me die, child, but to hear you talk, one would think I was quite *passée*! Because the bud is more delicate, has the rose

full-blown no merits? Because I mayn't do for the blaze of meridian day, is there no such thing as candlelight beauty? Let me tell you, child, that in the eyes of *some* people, *some* people may have scarcely less charms than—*some* people; (*Crosses to R.H.*) and though I mayn't represent quite as well as yourself the Goddess of *Spring*, I flatter myself I may still figure with great effect as a *Summer Syren*.—(*Crosses to L.H.*) But time runs away, my tire-woman waits, and I fly to arrange my cockle-shells. *Adieu, Mademoiselle.* [*Exit, dancing, L.H.*]

Rosa. Poor Camilla! what pity that with so good a heart the levity of her head—yet why blame a folly so innocent, and which keeps her in such good humour with herself and others? Ah! rather let me strive to dispel my own delusion, so dangerous to myself and so repugnant to the wishes of my friends. Oh! Love, love, love! Dear, dear, I wish I didn't know what the disagreeable word means! [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE VI.—*The Duke's Bed-Chamber. Night.*

A balcony in the centre; on oneside of it, a bed in an alcove; on the other, a large mirror.

The DUKE, LEMELINO, MANFRONE, STEPHANO, BERTOLDO, and Attendants are discovered. The Duke delivers letters to Stephano, who promises to use speed, and goes off, R.H. The Duke dismisses the rest. The room is now only lighted by a large candlestick with three

branches placed on a table near the alcove, at which the Duke is seated.

The Duke. Yet after all it must be owned, this Rugantino is a singular character! The man, who can do what he has done, must possess such talents and such courage, as at the head of an army would enable him to conquer half the world! Would I could once see this Rugantino!

Rug. (*Who during this speech has come softly from the alcove, and now claps the Duke on the shoulder.*) Look up, then! (*The Duke starts from his chair—Rugantino nods to him familiarly.*)

The Duke. (*After a pause.*) Man—who art thou?

Rug. Thou see'st me! and can'st doubt? Well then, I am the Bravo Rugantino! Foscari's murderer—and the Republic's most devoted slave.

The Duke. Rugantino—thou art a fearful—a detestable man!

Rug. Aye? Well! perhaps I am so; but at least 'tis certain, Andreas, that you and I stand on the same line; for at this moment are we the two greatest men in Venice, you in your way, I in mine—(*The Duke moves towards the door, Rugantino bars his passage.*) Hold, friend! not so fast! we must first have some conversation.

The Duke. (*With offended dignity.*) Indeed? then be this the subject. Mark me, miscreant! Instantly confess who bribed you to murder Foscari, abjure your bloody trade, quit the Republic, or I swear—

Rug. Quit it? abjure—and why should I do all this?—through fear of thee? Ho! ho! (*Laugh-*

ing, rudely.) through fear of Venice? Ha! Rugantino fears not Venice; 'tis Venice that fears Rugantino! Quit the Republic? Well! on one condition—

The Duke. Name it!

Rug. 'Tis a mere trifle!—Give me your daughter for my bride.

The Duke. Insolent!—My daughter is already a Prince's bride! Within this hour my written promise sent to the Prince of Milan—

Rug. Aye? Well, well! within another hour this dagger in the Prince's heart shall make your written promise void.

The Duke. Has Heaven no lightnings? (*Goes to his seat.*)

Rug. Hear yet more—I've sold for ten thousand ducats the lives of your friends Lomelino and Manfrone: now give me Rosabella, and I'll break the bargain.

The Duke. (*Frantic with rage, snatches up the light, and hustens to the door.*) Monster! Guards! guards!

Rug. Say you so? Thus then! (*Takes off his hat, and suddenly strikes out the light with it; he then steps back to the mirror, which he pushes away, and passes through the aperture.*)

The Duke. Ha! miscreant—Lights! lights, I say! (*The door opens.*)

Rug. (*Putting his head out.*) Au revoir, good father that is to be! (*Closes the mirror.*)

Enter BERTOLDO and Guards, R.H. with Torches.

The Duke. Seize him!

Ber. Whom, my Lord? We see no one.

(The Guards search the Room.)

The Duke. Traitors! Have you let him pass?

Ber. Pass? No one has past us.

The Duke. Not pass'd you?

Ber. Nor is any one here.

The Duke. My brain turns round!—'Tis a fiend in human shape.

Enter ROSABELLA, R.H.

Ros. Dear father what means—

The Duke. Oh! my child—Rugantino—even now he was here!

Ros. Good heavens!

The Duke. He threatened too—*(To Bertoldo.)* Call Manfrone and Lomelino hither instantly!—Fly!

[Exit Bertoldo, R.H.]

Steph. (Without.) Where is the Duke?

The Duke. What new alarm?

Enter STEPHANO, R.H.

Steph. Justice, justice!—The prince of Milan—

The Duke. Say on! Be quick!

Steph. Within this hour arrived at Venice.—Even now I found him in his chamber—bleeding—dying—

The Duke. Heavens!

Steph. He murmured—"A base assassin—!" and expired. Near him lay your written promise; a bloody dagger was struck through it, and—

The Duke. That dagger—Bring it! Away!

[*Exit Stephano, R.H.*]

Enter BERTOLDO, R.H.

Bert. (*A letter in his hand.*) My lord, the chambers of Manfrone and Lomelino both are vacant. In vain—(*A sealed packet is thrown into the room.*)

The Duke. What's that?

Bert. This letter was thrown into the balcony—(*Giving it to the Duke.*)

The Duke. Manfrone's hand?—I tremble.—Read, read, my child!

Ros. (*Opens it, and reads.*) Lomelino lies dead at my feet, and his murderer compels me to write this in his blood—I die, Andreas, and by the hand of—(*She screams, and drops the letter which the Duke snatches up.*)

Enter STEPHANO, and Guards, R.H.

Steph. Here is the dagger, and on the hilt stands the name of —

Ros. (*Looking at the dagger.*)

The Duke. (*Examining the letter at the time.*)

'Tis Rugantino.

Rug. (*Without, as if under the balcony.*) Ho! ho?

All. Hark! (Some run to the balcony; the rest remain, as if petrified by amazement, and form a tabular.)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Palace Gardens.*

“Huzzas” are heard without, and shouts of “Flodoardo! Flodoardo!”

ROSABELLA enters from the Palace, R.H.S.E.

Ros. He is returned!—Flodoardo is returned!—Oh! joy past utterance. But he returned against my positive orders—I must be angry with him—*very* angry.—But alas the day! how shall I manage to conceal my pleasure! See, see, he comes!

Enter RUGANTINO, R.H.S.E. clad in glittering armour, from the Palace Every trace of deformity is gone, and he appears a young and handsome warrior.

Rug. (Aside.) She’s here—and oh! so lovely!—Alas! sweet maid! how would the roses of thy cheek grow pale, knew’st thou, that the man now approaching is the dreaded Rugantino—! (*He advances, bowing respectfully.*)—Lady!

Ros. (*Aside.*) Cavalier—I—you—you have been *very* long absent—that is—I mean—did you receive much pleasure from your travels?

Rug. (*His voice during this scene is always tender and melancholy.*) Much—for every where I heard the praise of Rosabella.

Ros. (*Seriously.*) Flodoardo!—will you again offend me?

Rug. After this hour I shall never offend you more—Lady, I come to say farewell—for ever?

Ros. For ever?—Ah! Flodoardo, and can you then leave me?—Can you leave my father, I meant to say?

Rug. (*With a melancholy smile.*) Your father?

Ros. His friendship for you is so warm—

Rug. I value it highly; but it cannot make me happy.

Ros. (*Smiling faintly.*) Does then your happiness require so much?

Rug. (*With enthusiasm.*) It does! it does!—But one boon can make me happy—I have begged for it on my knees!—(*Pressing her hand to his lips.*)—I have begged for it, Rosabella, and my suit has been rejected.

Ros. (*Trying gently to disengage her hand.*) Enthusiast!

Rug. (*Drawing her nearer to him.*) Rosabella!

Ros. What would you of me?

Rug. Your heart! my happiness!

Ros. Flodoardo! (*After a moment's struggle with herself, she forces her hand from him.*) Leave me! I command you!—leave me this instant.

(*He bows, and retires with a melancholy air. At the palace-gate he stops, and waves his hand.*)

Rug. Lady, farewell!—We meet—no more!

Ros. Stay, oh! stay, Flodoardo! I—I am thine!

Rug. (*Rushing back.*) Rosabella!

Ros. Thine!—and for ever? (*He falls on his knee, and she sinks upon his bosom.*)

The DUKE enters from the palace, R.H.S.E.

The Duke. Do my eyes deceive me?

Ros. (*Shrieking.*) My father!

The Duke. How has my confidence been betrayed! (*He turns to leave them.*)

Rug. Stay, noble Andreas; stay, and hear—

The Duke. Young man, what excuse?—

Rug. Excuse? Oh! I need none for loving Rosabella; 'twere for him to excuse himself, who had seen Rosabella, and *not* loved her!—Andreas, I adore your daughter; I demand her for my bride.

The Duke. (*Proudly.*) You?—A needy stranger, who—

Ros. (*Hastening to the Duke, throwing her arms round his neck, and hiding her face in his bosom.*) Oh! be not incensed with him, dear father!

The Duke. (*With solemnity.*) Rosabella!—hast thou given this youth thy heart,—given it to him—irrevocably?

Rug. (*Repeats with emphasis, while his countenance becomes suddenly overcast, and he presses his hand against his breast, as if to repress some pain-*

ful feeling.) Irrevocably?—Ah! (Rosabella raises her head with a smile, and while one arm is still round the Duke's neck, she extends the other towards Rugantino, and presses his hand.)

The Duke. I am answered! Flodoardo, (*Crosses to centre.*) you see this maid!—will you deserve her?

Rug. Deserve her? Ask what thou wilt, and I swear—

The Duke. Mark then! The murderer of Manfrone and Lomelino, of Foscari and the Prince of Milan.—Go! bring him hither!—alive, or dead, thou must give into my power the terrible banditti-king, Rugantino.

Rug. (Starting.) My noble lord!—

Ros. Oh! no, no, no! he must not! Too surely this detested monster—

Rug. (Anxiously.) Detested?—Oh! silence, Rosabella; at least allow me to *hope!* Wilt thou swear, Andreas, that Rugantino once in your power, nothing shall prevent Rosabella from being my bride?

The Duke. I swear it.

Rug. Enough! now mark me, Duke—You give a masque this night in the Nereid's Island?

The Duke. I do. All Venice is invited.

Rug. 'Tis well! Let my purpose be kept secret; and as soon as all those are arrived, whose names are in this list, (*Giving a paper,*) your guards must surround the only entrance to the Saloon. Then let them discharge their muskets, and if I *still* alive, at that signal will I produce before you this dreaded Rugantino.

The Duke. You shall be obeyed—But how—

Rug. No questions! I must away—Rosabella—

Ros. (*Crosses to centre, weeping, and embracing him*) Oh! Flodoardo—perhaps—Rugantino's dagger—But no, no, no!—Heaven is just, Heaven is merciful, and we *shall* meet again!—Away then!—Come, father, come!

[*Exit Ros. and Duke, R.H.U.E. Rug. L.H.*

SCENE II.—*A ruined Monastery.—Sunset.*

Enter FALIERI, MEMMO, and GONZAGA, L.H.U.E.

Fal. Our associates not arrived?—Yet Rugantino charged us to muster our forces here, and engaged to meet us at sunset.

Gon. 'Tis a perilous knave, that Rugantino!

Mem. Perilous?—I protest, I'm glad our plot is to be executed to-night, if it's only that I mayn't come into contact any more with that devil incarnate! I really believe he deals with the Black Gentleman, and that no mischief happens in Venice without *his* having a finger in the pye!—If any one dies, it's *he* kills them; if a house is on fire, it's *he* kindles it; nay, I'm morally certain, 'twas he that occasioned the last earthquake!

Fal. Yet at least he keeps his word—Lomeline and Manfrone are already no more.

Mem. Very true, but yet—Heigho! my poor ten thousand ducats!

Gon. Hark?

Fal. 'Tis Contarino!—Now, friend, where's Rugantino?

Enter CONTARINO, R.H.U.E.

Con. Even now I left him. Flodoardo is returned, and Rugantino thinks it good to despatch him immediately. I warrant he'll soon give a good account of him!

Mem. Nay, when *despatching* is the business, to do the gentleman justice, he loses no time.

Con. Are you all invited to the Duke's masque to-night?

Fal. All! and in the most urgent and flattering manner

Con. That's well! it proves we are not suspected.

Mem. I only hope there's no trick in all this.—If this show of kindness should be only a take-in, now.—Mercy on me! my teeth chatter at the thought!

Con. Mark me, friends—we must go armed to the Duke's.

Fal. Leave his highness to *me*; this poniard is quite at his service.

Gon. The whole Council of Ten are invited—

Con. Down with them every man.

Mem. Aye, aye! fine talking!—But suppose it should turn out to be—"Down with ourselves?"

Con. Silence, thou white-livered wretch!

Mem. Come! don't be so snappish, if you please!
(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Con. The stroke of midnight must be the signal for Gonzaga's quitting the saloon, and hastening to seize the Arsenal.

Fal. As soon as he hears the alarm-bell, the Admiral Adorno will lead his people to our assistance.

Con. Oh! our success is sure, and—But our comrades approach. Be alert, friends; hasten to distribute the arms and crimson scarfs, which are to distinguish our partizans.

Enter PISANI and CONSPIRATORS, L.H.—scarfs, swords, pistols, &c. are distributed; and each drawing his sword, they kneel, and swear fidelity.

Con. Strangers approach—Disperse, and remember that the signal is—

All. Midnight! [*Exeunt, severally.*]

Enter the DUKE, R.H. CAMILLA, L.H. dressed as a Syren, with a comb in one hand, and a looking-glass in the other.

The Duke. What news, Camilla?

Cam. The best, your highness. Every thing's ready, the Tritons and Nereids are dressed, the gondolas are waiting, and we're all impatient to be gone.

The Duke. Why, Camilla, you are in high spirits!

Cam. In spirits? In ecstacies! My head's at this moment a chaos of the most enchanting images, of nothing but masks, coloured lamps, and musicians, conchs, cupids, and cockle-shells!

The Duke Delightful!--And may I ask what you are to be?

Cam. (*Curtseying with a smile of self-satisfaction.*) A Syren, your highness.

The Duke. A Syren!--Truly, Camilla, 'twas lucky for Ulysses that you were not a Syren in his days; closing his ears would not have availed him; he must have closed his eyes too.

Cam. (*Curtseying.*) Oh! mercy!--Oh! Heaven!--Let me die, but your highness makes me blush!

The Duke. 'Tis the better:--Nothing becomes beauty like blushing. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Cam. So! So!--Such warmth!--"Nothing becomes beauty like--" Let me die if his highness isn't a little smitten with me himself.

Steph. (*Without, L.H.*) Camilla! Signora Camilla!

Cam. It's Stephano! and quite *Tritonised*, I protest.

Enter STEPHANO, dressed as a Triton, L.H.

Cam. Charming, Signor! charming!--Well, let me die, but sea-green's a most becoming colour! and then that beard's so divinely *d.gagée* as the French have it--

Steph. Very likely! But come, come! the Duke stays for you!

Cam. Stays for me? I fly, Signor, I fly!—
Now then for the Nereid's island.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE III.—*An immense Grotto, composed of variegated spars and crystals. In the centre a large porch (with folding doors richly ornamented) projects far into the scene.*

On R.H.S.E. the DUKE is seated under a canopy on an elevated throne; FALIERI stands on the steps of it, conversing with the Duke. Two Gothic seats below the throne. On the L.H. in the front are CONTARINO, MEMMO, and GONZAGA; LAURA, PISANI, Lords and Ladies, &c. form groupes in the back-ground.

Con. Look, Gonzaga, how kindly the Duke smiles on Falieri.

Gon. 'Tis plain that he suspects nothing.

Con. Now Memmo, what are become of your fears?

Mem. Fears? I feel so bold, so desperate, that I quite long for midnight.

Con. (*Laughing.*) Oh! brave Memmo! (*Flourish of music.*)—But the masque is beginning.—Look! Pan and the Sylvan Deities are arriving in honour of the birth-day of Thetis.

(*A procession enters—Pan, dancing, Satyrs and Hamadryads—Diana with her Nymphs**)

* The remainder of the Masque is now transposed to the conclusion of the piece.

Mars in his chariot ; Warriors—Bacchus seated on a ton ; Bacchannals. On one side, Venus, with Cupid descends ; and Minerva on the other. The Celestial Palace comes down amidst thunder and lightning—Jupiter, Juno, &c. come out of the Palace, which re-ascends—Pluto and Proserpine rise on a burning throne ; they alight, and the Car sinks.)

Mem. Well ! Pluto's as like Rugan—

Con. (Stopping his mouth.) Hush !

(*Proserpine expresses her envy of the beauty of the three Goddesses ; she waves her sceptre, and a golden apple appears with this inscription—" For the Fairest."*—She throws it before them.—They contend for it. *Marine Music.*—At this moment a volley of musquetry is heard. All start in horror ; the music stops abruptly ; a dead silence for a moment.)

All the Guests. What was that !

The Duke. (*Aside.*) 'Twas the signal.

Ros. (*Aside to Camilla.*) My heart beats—!

Mem. (*To the Duke.*) Suffer me to enquire what noise—(*He opens the folding doors ; the Porch appears filled with guards.*)

Guards. Back !

Mem. (*Starting.*) Guards ? (*Runs down to L.H.*)

The Guests. Guards ? Guards ?

The Duke. (*Advancing.*) Fear nothing, my friends !—this precaution regards no one here ; but know, before an hour expires, you will see in this saloon—the Bravo Rugantino.

All. How?

The Duke. Yes! Flodoardo has engaged,—

Rug. (*Without.*) Give us way!

Ros. (*In raptures.*) 'Tis he, and safe!

(*The Guards open to the right and left, and Rugantino still as Flodoardo, rushes in, wrapt in a large mantle.*)

Mem. Bless me!—I'm afraid that—

Con. (*Sternly*) Be calm, Signor! there is nothing to fear.

Rug. Signors, you all know my business here! Answer then, Duke of Venice; have you not sworn, that Rugantino once in your power, nothing shall prevent Rosabella from being my bride?

The Duke. I have.

Rug. Know then, he is in your power—is in mine.

The Duke. Dead or living?

Rug. He still lives.

All Consp. (*Hastily.*) He lives!

Rug. He still lives, Signors. (*Bowing.*)

Ros. (*Embracing Camilla.*) Did'st thou hear that Camilla? the villain still lives! Not one drop of blood has stained the innocent hand of Flodoardo.

Rug. (*Shuddering.*) Innocent?—Ah!—Now then be prepared—I'll produce the Bravo before you, and—

Can. Oh! Heaven's, not here, Signor! I shall die of a thousand little fears, if you bring him here!

Mem. And I shall die of ten thousand little fears.

Rug. Fear nothing, good Camilla. Be seated, Andreas. Let the rest arrange themselves behind the Duke—*Rugantino's coming!*

(The Duke seats himself; Rosabella is on one side leaning on Camilla; the Conspirators are on the other in evident dismay.)

Rug. *(Advancing towards the porch.)* Rugantino!—*(A pause—he retires still further back.)*—Rugantino!

Ros. I tremble, lest—

Rug. *(Within the porch, but still in sight, though his back is turned to the spectators.)*—Rugantino! I say.

Ros. *(Rushing towards him)* Oh! venture not, Flodoardo—*(At the moment that she lays her hand on his arm, he throws off his cloak and helmet, and appears in the habit, and with the countenance of the Bravo!*

Rug. Ho! ho!—*(Rosabella falls senseless at his feet, Andreas starts from his chair. All utter a cry of surprise and terror.)*

Rug. *(In the Bravo's voice.)* Now then! You wished to see the Bravo Rugantino? Here he stands, and is come to claim his bride.

Con. Without there! Guards!

Rug. *(Presenting a pistol.)* That word again, and you never speak another!

Ros. *(Recovering.)*—Dreadful illusion!—Methought—Flodoardo—

Rug. *(In his natural voice.)* Illusion?—Rosabella, 'twas none; your beloved Flodoardo and the Bravo Rugantino are the same; in me you behold both.

Ros. (In despair.) 'Tis false! 'tis false! Flodoardo's actions were good and glorious as a Demi-God's! Flodoardo and thou—Wretch, whom many a bleeding ghost has long since accused at the throne of Heaven, dare not thou to prophane the name of Flodoardo!—'Tis false! 'tis false!

Rug. (Proud and earnest.) Then mark, and be convinced!—*(He turns away, and in a moment appears with Flodoardo's countenance and the Bravo's habit.)* Look on me now, Rosabella; you see me changed; but change as I may, of one thing be assured: I am the man whom you loved as Flodoardo. Rosabella—dost thou love me *still*?

Ros. (Throwing herself on Camilla's bosom.) Man! man! Now God forgive you for torturing me so cruelly!

The Duke. (Recovering from his stupor.)—Guards! seize him! To the scaffold!

Rug. What?—Have I not kept my promise? Duke of Venice, will you not keep your oath?

The Duke. It was given to the virtuous Flodoardo; with the murderer Rugantino I made no compact. Speak, Senators; ought I to keep an oath so made?

The Senators. No, no! to the scaffold!

Mem. Aye, to the scaffold!

Rug. Is it so then? and will no one intercede?—Signor Contarino! One word in my favour—

Con. Away! address not thyself to me!

Rug. Good Signor Memmo, plead for me! You know me well, and—

Mem. (Alarmed.) I?—I know nothing at all about you!—I never saw you before—never heard of you—and hope never to see or hear of you again!

Rug. What? and does no one pity the wretched Rugantino?—*No one?*—*Are all silent?*—*all?*—My fate then is decided! To the scaffold!—*(Going.)*

Ros. (Springing forward with a cry of agony, and falling at the Duke's feet, who is crossing to the Conspirators, L.H.)—*Mercy! mercy!*—*Pardon him!*—*Pardon—Rugantino!*

Rug. (In rapture.) Say'st thou so?—*Ha!* an Angel pleads for Rugantino in his last moments.

Ros. He is a sinner—but leave him to the justice of Heaven! He is a sinner but Rosabella adores him still!

The Duke. (Repulsing her.) Away, unworthy girl!—he dies!

Rug. And can you look on with dry eyes, while that innocent dove bleeds at your feet? Go, barbarian? you never loved her as she deserved! *(Raising her from the ground.)* Now then she is yours no longer! thou art mine, Rosabella; art Rugantino's; thou lov'st me, as I would be loved; I am blessed, and now to business! *(The Duke returns to the throne. He places Rosabella, who is almost fainting, in Camilla's arms.)* Within there!—*(He sounds a whistle; Guards rush in, M.D. and surround the Conspirators; the doors are closed after them.)*—Guard them well! You have your orders!

The Duke. What means—

Rug. It means, that this night *your* life and the constitution of Venice were doomed to conclude together.

Con. Noble Andreas, believe not—

Rug. (*With majesty.*) Silence! I know your whole plot, and the officers of justice by my orders have already seized the gentry with the crimson scarfs. Duke, still doubt you my truth? Mark then! (*Turning to the Conspirators.*) The first, who acknowledges his guilt, shall be freely pardoned! I swear it, *I*, the Bravo Rugantino.

Mem. (*Falling at the Duke's feet.*) Venetians, Rugantino has told you true!

Rug. Live!—(*Memmo rises.*)

Mem. So I will as long as I can. [*Exit, M.D.*]

The Consp. 'Tis false! 'tis false!

Rug. False? Then hear me—and then tremble—Manfrone and Lomelino, the Duke's friends, are still alive. (*The doors fly open; Manfrone and Lomelino appear.*) Away with them!--(*The Duke embraces Manfrone and Lomelino.*)

Ros Joy; joy! Camilla, joy!—Rugantino is not then a murderer! Alas? and yet Foscari's death—

Rug. Fear nothing, my love! Chance led me to the cave, where Foscari lay robbed and wounded by banditti, and before the venerable man expired, I swore to revenge his murder.—Traced out the villains; in whose society I received some hints of the conspiracy. I made my plans for defeating it known to Lomelino, who assisted me in my designs; he taught me a private entrance to the Duke's chamber, and

persuaded Manfrone to share his concealment, until it became needful that their deaths should be believed

The Duke. But the Prince of Milan's murder—
Rug. Was imaginary. Stephano was in my secret, and acted by my orders.

The Duke. And the Prince of Milan himself—
Rug. (*Throwing off his Bravo's habit, and appearing splendidly dressed with several orders, &c.*)
—Behold him!

The Duke. Amazement!

Ros. You? you the Prince of Milan?—

The Prince. Even so. The perfidy of one ungrateful woman had made me distrust the whole sex; and I swore never to unite my fate but to her who would be constant to me under every circumstance. Rosabella has stood the trial; and I now glory to salute as Milan's future mistress the *Bravo's Bride!*

Ros. Oh! happy, happy Rosabella!

The Duke. How bright a sunshine after a day so stormy! Forth, forth, my son! Let a thousand torches show Venice her preserver! Let a thousand voices join in the exulting shout—
“Honoured be the Bravo!—Happy is the Bravo's Bride!”

All. Huzza!

(*The folding doors open—the back ground is lighted by the Moon Neptune and Amphitrite enter—then Nereids and Tritons, Stephano is among them—then Camilla and two other females as Syrens—Last a machine representing a rock of red coral floating on a silver sea, whose waves are in motion. On the summit of the rock is a*

brilliant conch-shell, in which sits Rosabella. Artificial Zephyrs hang over her, some seeming to fan her with their wings, others with their breath to impel the rock forwards, which is drawn by enormous Dolphins, spouting up water; while on the head of each stands a little Cupid, holding golden reins, with which he appears to guide the animal. The three rival Goddesses agree to give Rosabella the apple, even Proserpine applauding the decision.—The Conch sinks gently, till it touches the earth, when Rosabella quits the machine, and receives the apple from the Goddesses.)

(The Prince and Rosabella enter the conch, which ascends to its former elevation; the machine moves on in triumph, and as it passes along the front of the stage, the curtain falls.)

